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Paul Legislation Passes House *Protects Religious Expression*

Washington, DC - Late last month, Congressman Ron Paul introduced H.R.4084, the Church Protection Act. This legislation was designed to stop federal funds under the Community Development Block Grant program from being used in church condemnation proceedings. This week, Paul engaged in a strategic legislative maneuver and had the bill enacted by the House of Representatives. In order to get rapid consideration for the bill, Paul reintroduced it as an amendment to HR 1776, The American Homeownership and Economic Opportunity Act of 2000. Paul first succeeded in having the amendment made in order by the Rules Committee. Then, to ensure final passage, Paul worked to get bipartisan support for the legislation by enlisting the assistance of Carolyn Kilpatrick who cosponsored the amendment. This week HR 4084 was attached, as an amendment, to HR 1776 prior to final passage of that bill. The Paul Amendment was adopted by the full House of Representatives on voice vote. "I am happy that my legislation was included in this bill adopted by the full House and will now make its way to the Senate and hopefully to be signed into law by the President. The federal government should never be in the business of funding activities that negatively impact the rights of individuals to worship. This is a major step in addressing the recent imbalance in federal activities tending to infringe upon constitutionally-guaranteed free exercise rights," Paul said. Paul stated that the problem had first come to his attention as the result of reports regarding St. Luke's Pentecostal Church, an inner-city congregation in New Cassel, New York. "The legislation I crafted was not just designed to address one certain instance. If any church can be destroyed or displaced with federal funds, then all churches are subject to such difficulties. Our founding fathers well recognized that this sort of thing should not go on, and that is why they gave us the first and fifth amendments," concluded Paul.

